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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 BRIDGETOWN 000438

SIPDIS
SENSITIVE

STATE FOR WHA/CAR AND INL

E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: Barbados and the Eastern Caribbean: June 2009 NAS Update

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SUMMARY

¶1. (SBU) The island nations that make up Embassy Bridgetown's area of responsibility - Barbados, Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, Grenada, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, and St. Vincent and the Grenadines continue to see a steady increase in the volume of narcotics destined for and transshipped through the region. Local law enforcement continues to be under-resourced and plagued with antiquated legal codes and corruption in the ranks. A functional regional maritime entity, expanded training and a robust integrity (vetting) program will be required in the fight against narco-traffickers along the U.S. Third Border. Following is a summary of recent law enforcement and counter-narcotics activity and training in Embassy Barbados AOR. End Summary.

RECENT ENFORCEMENT SUCCESSES

¶2. (SBU) The following is a snapshot of recent narcotic enforcement/seizures in the region:

BARBADOS:

-- During the month of June a total of 44 kilograms of cocaine were seized by police in Barbados which resulted in the arrest of 4 defendants.

-- In one case, responsible for 40 kilograms of cocaine, DEA collaboration with British SOCA resulted in the arrest of 3 defendants off the coast of Barbados. The seized cocaine originated in Venezuela and was destined for the United Kingdom. The organization was a pre-selected IDEC (International Drug Enforcement Conference) Target that had been identified and targeted in the past year.

ANTIGUA:

-- During the month of June a total of 5,200 kilograms of marijuana were seized by police in Antigua resulting in the arrest of 5 defendants.

ST. LUCIA:

-- During the month of June a total of 1 kilogram of cocaine and 49 kilograms of marijuana were seized by police in St Lucia resulting in the arrest of 2 defendants.

MARTINIQUE:

-- During the month of June a total of 29 kilograms of cocaine were seized by authorities with no arrests reported.

TRAINING AND ASSISTANCE

13. (SBU) The following is a breakdown of training provided during June in the region:

NAS FUNDED OR FACILITATED:

-- ILEA Advanced Management Course Roswell, New Mexico: 6/1 - 6/26: A total of 10 law enforcement officers from Barbados and the Eastern Caribbean joined colleagues from Trinidad, Jamaica and the Bahamas to participate in the Advanced Management Course at ILEA New Mexico.

-- NAS funded the travel and participation of the President of the National Committee for the Prevention of Alcoholism and Drug Dependency of Barbados, Mr. Victor Roach, to attend the Annual Conference of the National Association of Drug Court Professionals in Anaheim, California.

DEA FACILITATED:

-- DEA provided an agent to address an Anti-Doping Conference held by the Ministry of Sports and Health in Barbados.

RSO/DS FACILITATED:

-- RSO assisted DS/ ATA in providing 24 officers from across the region with a 2 week forensic crime scene investigation course related to terrorist acts.

U.S. MILITARY FUNDED (MLO/DOD):

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-- A total of 10 U.S. Navy Divers conducted training in Barbados for 32 regional divers from throughout the region.

-- MLO arranged for regional participants to attend the Caribbean Security and Strategy Seminar in Jamaica during the period of 6/7-6/13/09.

-- MLO arranged for participants from Antigua to attend a Senior Enlisted leader's conference in Chile during the period of 14 - 21 June.

-- MLO arranged for regional participants to attend a Port Security Safety Working Group conference in Puerto Rico during the period of 16 - 19 June.

-- MLO sent an 8 man military team from Barbados to Brazil for the Southcom sponsored Forces Commando competition during the period of 16 - 25 June.

-- MLO sent a participant to attend the Regional Disaster Preparation Seminar in Peru during the period of 16 - 21 June.

-- TAFT sent a Mobile Training Team to Grenada to work with, train and fix vessels of the maritime unit in Grenada.

-- MLO arranged for a 7 man USAF team to train 24 officers from the Special Services Unit of the St. Lucia Police Force in Search and Rescue techniques.

NAS TRAVEL AND ACTIVITIES

14. (SBU) The Narcotic Affairs Officer (NAO) and Narcotic Affairs Procurement Agent did not travel during the month of June.

-- The NAO worked closely during the month with the Canadian Embassy in assisting with the draft of a report on the Caribbean concerning Narcotic and Law Enforcement issues to be delivered at the Dublin

Grup Meeting in Brussels on 6/22/09. Major edits to the information were made based on assistance and information provided by DEA at post.

-- The AO met with the British High Commission Bridgetown head of the UK Security Advisory Team to discuss and coordinate a joint training initiative where AS would arrange with DOJ to send prosecutors from the region for training in asset forfeiture and money laundering prosecutions and the UK would arrange for training of judges from the region in the same subjects. It is anticipated that the prosecutor training will take place in late July and the training for Judges in November.

OTHER LAW ENFORCEMENT NEWS

15. (SBU) On June 4, 2009, a total of 6 defendants were convicted in the Supreme Court of Barbados for their roles in the possession and trafficking of 91.3 kilograms of marijuana and 119.4 kilograms of cocaine, which took place on November 30, 2005. This case is significant in that the principle defendant, Rohan Shastri Rambarran, a Guyanese and American Citizen, headed an identified PTO (Priority Trafficking Organization) as defined by DEA and was also the subject of a pre-selected IDEC target as identified and agreed upon by law enforcement in the region. This conviction is noteworthy and directly meets an Embassy Mission Strategic Plan goal of Combating International Crime and Drugs.

16. (SBU) Crime and especially crime related to gang activity continues to be a hot button issue within the region. During the month of June, St. Lucia experienced a higher than normal murder rate with a majority of it be associated with drugs and gangs. All countries within the Embassy's area of operation are requesting assistance and training related to investigating and controlling gangs.

17. (SBU) NAS at post has received inquiries and general interest about the proposed Caribbean Basin Security Initiative (CBSI) from police and judicial authorities within the region as well as law enforcement officials from Canada, the UK and the EU posted within the region. There appears to be a level of excitement and interest related to the possibilities of collaborative projects within the region in concert with CBSI.

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